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USE AND EVALUATION OF OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION MATERIALS.

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OF 18,000 SECONDARY SCHOOLS CONTACTED, 30 PERCENT RESPONDED TO A QUESTIONNAIRE ON OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION MATERIALS. OCCUPATIONAL LITERATURE WAS OBTAINED BY COUNSELORS 80 PERCENT OF THE TIME. ON THE AVERAGE, $178.00 IS AVAILABLE YEARLY FOR THIS PURCHASE. THE FACILITIES AVAILABLE FOR DISPLAYING MATERIALS ARE DESCRIBED. THE CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH STUDENTS USE OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION AND THE KINDS OF STUDENTS WHO USE THESE MATERIALS ARE DISCUSSED. THE INFORMATION SOURCES USED MOST FREQUENTLY ARE RATED AND EXPLAINED. COUNSELORS WERE ASKED TO EVALUATE TWO TYPES OF OCCUPATIONAL LITERATURE (DESCRIPTION AND OUTLOOK) FOR (1) TERMINAL STUDENTS, (2) STUDENTS PLANNING POST HIGH SCHOOL, VOCATIONAL, OR TECHNICAL TRAINING, AND (3) STUDENTS PLANNING TO ENTER JUNIOR COLLEGE OR COLLEGE. A SUMMARY OF THE INFORMATION IS PRESENTED IN PERCENTAGES. NO CONCLUSIONS ARE DRAWN BECAUSE OF THE LOW PERCENTAGE OF RETURNS. ANOTHER SURVEY OF SCHOOLS NOT PREVIOUSLY CONTACTED IS UNDERWAY. THIS SPEECH WAS PRESENTED AT THE AMERICAN PERSONNEL AND GUIDANCE ASSOCIATION CONVENTION, DALLAS, TEXAS, MARCH, 1967. (VL)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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USE AND EVALUATION OF OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION MATERIALS: PAPER PRESENTED AT AMERICAN PERSONNEL AND GUIDANCE CONVENTION, MARCH, 1967

Philip A. Perrone

I want to begin by apologizing for not presenting the results from the 4,500 counselors who participated in this study. My scapegoat is the 3600 computer at Wisconsin which broke down for two weeks and then had a crossed connection which prevented it from accurately reading the tape. By the time I left Madison everything was corrected and the responses of 4,500 school administrators, 2,800 school librarians, and 5,500 vocational teachers had been tabulated, but, alas, the strain was too much and the tape broke while the computer was working on counselor responses. I was assured that I would have an output by Easter.

My presentation will therefore focus upon the data from the administrators, librarians, and the vocational teachers.

I would first like to describe the procedure used and the representativeness of the respondents.

1. The instrument was piloted three times before being sent out.
2. Every secondary school listed in the U. S. Office of Education was sent a packet of materials, a reminder post card, and another packet of materials.
3. Approximately 18,000 schools were mailed materials. However, we later discovered the addresses listed by the Office of Education range in accuracy from 100% for Hawaii (the only perfect one) down to 59% for Missouri. Roughly 76% of the present secondary schools in the U. S. are listed while some 4,500 schools which no longer exist are carried on the rolls.

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4. Our best estimate is we contacted 76% of the existing secondary schools and obtained responses from 30% of those contacted. This is pretty poor when you remember we were after the total population and not a sample.
5. We did receive responses from every city with a population over ½ million except Dallas, Texas.
6. Approximately 250 interviews with non-respondents will be conducted in order to see to what extent our responses are biased.
7. While the experts (if such exist) felt we should differentiate between outlook and descriptive information, most counselors felt it was a sneaky way to assess reliability of responses and really were not happy with what appeared to be parallel questions.
8. Only one U.S. Congressman accused us of wasting taxpayers money but he apologized when we told him we were "wasting" Ford Foundation funds.

TURNING TO THE SCHOOLS THAT RESPONDED:

1. A picture of the 4,500 schools would indicate:

   11% are K-12
   20% are 7-12
    4% are 8-12
   40% are 9-12
   23% are 10-12

2. According to the building principal the average enrollment is 869.

3. 49% of the pupils are males.

4. 79% of the pupils are Caucasion.

5. After graduating from high school:

   27% enter employment directly
    3% enter apprenticeship training
    7% enter the armed forces
   10% enter vocational, technical, or trade school
   42% enter college or junior college
    6% unknown

6. A composite picture of students' home backgrounds shows:

24% from the farm
20% from rural but non-farm
21% suburban
27% city proper
4% inner core
2% (?)

OCCUPATIONAL LITERATURE IT WAS FOUND:

1. Is purchased or obtained 80% of the time by the counselor or director of guidance.

2. On the average $178 is available for purchasing occupational literature yearly.

3. Facilities available for displaying materials include:

12% bulletin boards only
8% section of the library
11% space in the counselor's office
20% use made of both the counselor's office and the library
12% use the library, counselor's office, and bulletin boards
35% some other combination

WHO USES OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION--UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES?

1. The 2,800 librarians indicated:
   A. 12th grade boys and girls made the greatest use of informational materials
   B. 11th grade boys and girls made the least use of these materials
   C. 44% of the boys and 30% of the girls in high school never seek information

2. The 2,500 trade and industrial teachers suggested:
   A. 45% of the boys and 87% of the girls in high school never sought information regarding jobs in trade and industry, agriculture, or homemaking.

3. The 1,500 distributive education teachers noted 75% of boys and 60% of high school girls never seek information about jobs in distributive education.

4. The same number of commercial teachers indicated that 70% of the boys and 50% of the high school girls never sought information about jobs in the commercial field.

WHAT OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION SOURCES ARE USED MOST FREQUENTLY?

1. Librarians rate:
    1. Occupational briefs and pamphlets (55%)
    2. Occupational Outlook Handbook (48%)
    3. Books in general (38%)
2. Trade and industrial teachers rate:
    1. Textbooks dealing with subject matter (37%)
    2. Department of Agriculture publications (23%)
    3. Magazines in general (25%)
3. Distributive education teachers rate:
    1. Textbooks dealing with subject matter (40%)
    2. OOH (28%)
    3. Briefs and pamphlets (23%)
    4. Magazines in general (20%)
4. Ranking of commercial teachers is:
    1. Magazines in general (47%)
    2. Textbooks dealing with subject matter (27%)
    3. OOH (23%)
    4. Briefs and pamphlets (20%)

LIBRARIANS EXPLAIN STUDENTS' USE OF PARTICULAR SOURCES BECAUSE THESE SOURCES ARE:

1. Accurate
2. Readable (i.e., comprehensive, brief, clear, well organized, simple)
3. Up-to-date
4. Accessible--easy to find

THEY SUGGEST THESE MATERIALS COULD BE IMPROVED BY:

1. More frequent revisions
2. Better and more attractive bindings, plus more volumes
3. Better index
4. More graphs and charts

WHAT USE DO VOCATIONAL INSTRUCTORS MAKE OF INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS?

1. Trade and Industrial:

   A. Provide general occupational information (31%)
   B. Promote course goals (30%)
   C. Provide specific occupation information (30%)

2. Distributive education:

   A. Familiarize students with various occupations (generally) (49%)
   B. Promote course goals (16%)
   C. Develop understanding of business world (13%)
   D. Familiarize students with specific occupations (12%)

3. Commercial instructors:

   A. Provide general information on jobs (32%)
   B. Provide specific information on jobs (30%)
   C. Provide information on how to fill out applications (21%)

The counselors were asked to evaluate two types of occupational literature, description and outlook, for three groups of students which were defined in terms of educational attainment. More specifically, the definitions of the two types of literature and the three groups of students were:

Description information: Concerned with the individual in a job. It consists of a total description of a given job in terms of what must be done, with what tools, in what surroundings, by what kinds of people, and what the rewards for performing such activities are. It also includes the requirements necessary for the individual to successfully obtain a job and information on training and educational opportunities.

Outlook information: Consists primarily of data on the probable future employment opportunities in an occupation. It also includes information on current demands in a given area from which one can project to the future and more general facts about the labor market as a whole (to facilitate understanding of employment trends).

Educational attainment:

1. Students who terminate their education at high school
2. Students planning post high school vocational or technical training
3. Students planning to enter junior college or college

INFORMATION DESCRIBING THE SCHOOL SETTING AND STUDENT BODY

There were 3,555 counselors who returned questionnaires with complete information. Six percent work in K-12 settings, 22% in 7-12, 4% in 8-12, 37% in 9-12, 23% in 10-12, 1% in grade 10 only, 1% in grade 11 only, 2% in grade 12 only, and 4% in other combinations.

Summing across schools, 27% of the high school graduates enter employment directly, 3% enter apprenticeship programs, 8% enter the military, 12% enter vocational, technical, or trade schools, 42% enter college or junior college, and 8% are unaccountable.

The counselors average 85% of their time in guidance and counselor activities with a range from 25% to full-time. The respondents have been in counseling for an average of 6.6 years and have been

employed as counselors in their present setting for an average of 5.4 years. The average pupil-counselor ratio is 387:1 with a standard deviation of 239. It has been 10 years since the average respondent took a course in career information. When asked what emphasis was placed on career information in their graduate program, 32% indicated "considerable", 44% indicated "some", 19% indicated "little", and 4% indicated "none."

TO WHICH GROUP OF STUDENTS IS MOST OF THE DESCRIPTION LITERATURE YOU HAVE ON HAND DIRECTED?

high school or less	23%
vocational, technical, or trade	29%
college and professional	48%

DO YOU FEEL DESCRIPTION INFORMATION IS PREPARED FOR THE STUDENTS WHO NEED IT MOST?

Yes	67%
No	33%

IF NO, WHICH GROUP(S) NEED MORE?

high school or less	48%
vocational, technical, or trade	36%
both of the above	14%
college and professional	2%

IN YOUR COUNSELING SITUATION WHICH GROUP OF STUDENTS USES DESCRIPTION INFORMATION MOST?

high school or less	23%
vocational, technical, or trade	24%
college and professional	53%

SOURCES OF OCCUPATIONAL DESCRIPTION INFORMATION USED BY 3,555 COUNSELORS:

	H.S.	VOC-TECH	COLL
Occupational Outlook Handbook	37%	36%	28%
Briefs and pamphlets	24%	23%	24%
Information kits	14%	13%	13%
Dictionary of Occupational Titles	7%	6%	5%
General books	6%	5%	3%
Educational or training institutions' bulletins	-	3%	10%
Private publisher publications (directed toward educational information)	1%	6%	12%
State Employment Service publications	-	-	-
Occupational Outlook Quarterly	-	-	-
Other	11%	8%	5%

FOR EACH GROUP OF STUDENTS, WHAT ASPECTS OF DESCRIPTION INFORMATION ARE NOT ADEQUATELY COVERED?

	H.S.	VOC-TECH	COLL
Duties of the employee	16%	12%	11%
Hours of work	17%	15%	15%
Advancement	19%	17%	12%
Earnings and other rewards	15%	13%	10%
Working conditions	22%	18%	14%
General education level required	11%	9%	5%
Special training required	13%	12%	8%
Where required training can be obtained	37%	36%	23%

continuation of chart on p. 3

	H.S.	VOC-TECH	COLL
Previous work experience needed	24%	23%	16%
Related occupations: occupations in the same skill area	31%	31%	25%
Physical characteristics of those employed	29%	28%	25%
Psychological characteristics of those employed	45%	46%	41%
Special licenses required	21%	23%	16%
Tools or equipment required	26%	27%	16%
Number of workers employed	22%	20%	17%

RECALLING THE PRINCIPAL SOURCE OF DESCRIPTION INFORMATION YOU USE WITH EACH STUDENT GROUP, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING DIMENSIONS ARE NOT ADEQUATE?

	H.S.	VOC-TECH	COLL
Accuracy	33%	28%	21%
Currentness	45%	41%	36%
Sufficiency of detail	51%	48%	41%
Extent of coverage	51%	49%	41%
Ease in finding what is being sought	37%	34%	28%
Clarity	36%	31%	26%

IN USING DESCRIPTION LITERATURE WITH TERMINAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS:

in 15% of the schools, the students use the literature to answer questions or raise them

in 33% of the schools, the counselor uses it in educational or vocational planning

in 52% of the schools, it is split evenly between these two

IN USING DESCRIPTION LITERATURE WITH THOSE PLANNING TO ENTER VOCATIONAL OR TECHNICAL SCHOOLS:

in 13% of the schools, the students use the literature to answer questions or raise them

in 25% of the schools, the counselor uses it in educational or vocational planning

in 62% of the schools, it is split evenly between these two

IN USING DESCRIPTION LITERATURE WITH THE COLLEGE BOUND:

in 24% of the schools, the students use the literature to answer questions or raise them

in 14% of the schools, the counselor uses it in educational or vocational planning

in 62% of the schools, it is split evenly between these two

WHAT PRINCIPAL APPROACHES (FIRST, SECOND, THIRD) DO STUDENTS USE IN SEEKING DESCRIPTION INFORMATION?

	1st	2nd	3rd
Reading activities (assigned and self-referred)	48%	29%	21%
Individual counseling	21%	24%	16%
Field activities (visits and adult interviews)	8%	14%	18%
Group activities (class units, group guidance)	6%	8%	11%
Written reports or themes	2%	6%	5%
Publicity (bulletin boards, announcements)	6%	11%	6%
Career days and college nights	1%	1%	6%
Films and filmstrips	-	2%	7%
Lectures	-	2%	4%
Test interpretations	1%	1%	2%
Miscellaneous	7%	-	-
None mentioned	-	2%	4%

WHAT PRIMARY APPROACHES (FIRST, SECOND, THIRD) DO YOU USE IN PRESENTING DESCRIPTION INFORMATION?

	1st	2nd	3rd
Reading activities	5%	11%	11%
Individual counseling	18%	24%	16%
Field activities	2%	2%	6%
Group activities	31%	22%	14%
Written activities	3%	4%	6%
Publicity	23%	16%	5%
Career days and college nights	2%	5%	9%
Films and filmstrips	4%	6%	8%
Lectures	2%	5%	10%
Test interpretations	3%	4%	4%
Miscellaneous	6%	-	-
None mentioned	1%	1%	11%

THE MEAN RANK ORDER FOR SOURCES OF DESCRIPTION LITERATURE IS:

Government agencies	1.98
Private publishers	2.03
Professional and industrial societies	2.95
From people in the occupation or industry of interest to the pupil	4.39
Trade associations and labor unions	4.46
Periodicals not specifically designed to relate occupational information	5.04
Newspapers	5.47

DESCRIPTION LITERATURE IS OBTAINED:

by order of the counselor or someone else in the school	75%
in the school when the counselor arrived	13%
by mail without request	12%

THE FORMAT FOR DESCRIPTION LITERATURE PREFERRED BY COUNSELORS IS:

Pamphlets	68%
Films and other audio-visual	10%
Books	8%
Career days, field days, group presentations	6%
Varied forms	6%
Loose-leaf notebook	1%
Other	1%

REASONS COUNSELORS PREFER THE ABOVE FORMATS:

Convenient (can be given to students, easy storage)	39%
More effective (attracts more students, reaches poor readers, first-hand information)	17%
Easy to read (concise, condensed, good for poor readers)	7%
Cheap	4%
Current	4%
Good on details (tells where to obtain more information)	3%
Replaceable	1%
Accepted by students	1%
No comment	24%

SUGGESTIONS BY COUNSELOR FOR IMPROVING DESCRIPTION INFORMATION:

More frequent publications	36%
More general information (occupational interrelationships, more on industry)	19%
More specific information (physical and psychological information, local job information, more on least enjoyable job characteristics)	8%
Better writing (few lists of statistics, more wit, common language, accurate	11%
More visual aids (graphs, pictures, larger print)	4%
Available at different reading levels	1%
More summary	1%
Other	11%
No response	9%

TO WHICH GROUP OF STUDENTS IS MOST OF THE OUTLOOK LITERATURE YOU HAVE ON HAND DIRECTED?

high school or less	20%
vocational, technical, or trade	37%
college and professional	43%

DO YOU FEEL OUTLOOK INFORMATION IS PREPARED FOR THE STUDENTS WHO NEED IT MOST?

Yes	65%
No	35%

IF NO, WHICH GROUP(S) NEED MORE?

high school or less	60%
vocational, technical, or trade	22%
both of the above	15%
college and professional	3%

IN YOUR COUNSELING SITUATION WHICH GROUP OF STUDENTS USES OUTLOOK INFORMATION MOST?

high school or less	18%
vocational, technical, or trade	30%
college and professional	52%

SOURCES OF OCCUPATIONAL OUTLOOK INFORMATION USED BY 3,555 COUNSELORS:

	H.S.	VOC-TECH	COLL
Occupational Outlook Handbook	58%	58%	52%
Briefs and pamphlets	14%	13%	14%
Information kits	5%	5%	6%
Dictionary of Occupational Titles	3%	2%	-
General books	3%	3%	3%
Educational or training institutions bulletins	-	2%	6%
Private publisher publications (directed toward educational information)	1%	2%	5%
State Employment Service publications	5%	4%	2%
Occupational Outlook Quarterly	3%	3%	-
Other	8%	8%	12%

FOR EACH GROUP OF STUDENTS, WHAT ASPECTS OF OUTLOOK INFORMATION ARE NOT ADEQUATELY COVERED?

	H.S.	VOC-TECH	COLL
Projected job opportunities in specific occupations	23%	15%	12%
Projected job opportunities in specific geographical areas	42%	40%	34%
Current vacancies in specific occupations	39%	36%	30%
Current vacancies in specific geographical areas	45%	44%	38%
Estimated future skill requirements of the American labor force as a whole	25%	24%	19%
Main factors influencing the growth or decline of particular occupations	29%	29%	24%

continuation of chart on p. 9

	H.S.	VOC-TECH	COLL
Facts about employment and unemployment levels and trends	23%	21%	18%
Labor turnover	30%	27%	21%
Characteristics of the labor force	23%	20%	15%
Change in the use of various segments of the labor force	26%	24%	18%
Job stability	27%	24%	17%
Mobility in the occupational area	36%	34%	27%

RECALLING THE PRINCIPAL SOURCE OF OUTLOOK INFORMATION YOU USE WITH EACH STUDENT GROUP, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING DIMENSIONS ARE NOT ADEQUATE?

	H.S.	VOC-TECH	COLL
Accuracy	32%	28%	23%
Currentness	42%	39%	34%
Sufficiency of detail	50%	46%	41%
Extent of coverage	51%	46%	40%
Ease in finding what is being sought	38%	35%	30%
Clarity	38%	33%	28%

IN USING OUTLOOK LITERATURE WITH TERMINAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS:

in 14% of the schools, the students use the literature to answer questions or raise them

in 37% of the schools, the counselor uses it in educational or vocational planning

in 49% of the schools, it is split evenly between these two

IN USING OUTLOOK LITERATURE WITH THOSE PLANNING TO ENTER VOCATIONAL OR TECHNICAL SCHOOLS:

in 12% of the schools, the students use the literature to answer questions or raise them

in 30% of the schools, the counselor uses it in educational or vocational planning

in 58% of the schools, it is split evenly between these two

IN USING OUTLOOK LITERATURE WITH THE COLLEGE BOUND:

in 21% of the schools, the students use the literature to answer questions or raise them

in 18% of the schools, the counselor uses it in educational or vocational planning

in 61% of the schools, it is split evenly between these two

WHAT PRINCIPAL APPROACHES (FIRST, SECOND, THIRD) DO STUDENTS USE IN SEEKING OUTLOOK INFORMATION?

	1st	2nd	3rd
Reading activities	41%	9%	2%
Individual counseling	20%	8%	2%
Field activities	6%	5%	2%
Group activities	5%	3%	1%
Written reports or themes	1%	2%	1%
Publicity	5%	3%	1%
Career days and college nights	-	1%	-
Films and filmstrips	-	1%	-
Lectures	-	1%	-
Test interpretations	1%	-	-
Miscellaneous	10%	1%	-
None mentioned	11%	66%	91%

WHAT PRIMARY APPROACHES (FIRST, SECOND, THIRD) DO YOU USE IN PRESENTING OUTLOOK INFORMATION?

	1st	2nd	3rd
Reading activities	5%	4%	1%
Individual counseling	20%	11%	3%
Field activities	1%	1%	1%
Group activities	27%	10%	2%
Written activities	2%	1%	-
Publicity	18%	7%	2%
Career days and college nights	3%	2%	1%
Films and filmstrips	3%	3%	1%
Lectures	2%	3%	1%
Test interpretations	2%	1%	-
Miscellaneous	6%	-	2%
None mentioned	11%	57%	86%

THE MEAN RANK ORDER FOR SOURCES OF OUTLOOK LITERATURE IS:

Government agencies	1.51
Private publishers	2.46
Professional and industrial societies	3.04
People in the occupation or industry of interest to the pupil	4.25
Trade associations and labor unions	4.25
Periodicals not specifically designed to relate occupational information	4.78
Newspapers	4.92

OUTLOOK LITERATURE IS OBTAINED:

by order of the counselor or someone else in the school	75%
by mail without request	13%
in the school when the counselor arrived	12%

THE FORMAT FOR OUTLOOK LITERATURE PREFERRED BY COUNSELORS IS:

Pamphlets	61%
Films and other audio-visual	10%
Books	14%
Career days, field days, group presentations	5%
Varied forms	6%
Loose-leaf notebook	1%
Other	3%

REASONS COUNSELORS PREFER THE ABOVE FORMATS:

Convenient	32%
More effective	12%
Easy to read	5%
Cheap	3%
Current	7%
Good on details	3%
Replaceable	1%
Accepted by students	-
No comment	37%

SUGGESTIONS BY COUNSELOR FOR IMPROVING OUTLOOK INFORMATION:

More frequent publication	32%
More general information (more data on trends, show occupational interrelationships)	17%
More specific information (more on job projection, more local information on occupations)	7%
Better writing	9%
More visual aids	5%
Available at different reading levels	-
More summary	1%
Other	10%
No response	19%

The percentages that have been given represent a summary of the information we have received to date. We have not attempted to draw any conclusions although some are readily apparent.

Since the percentage of returns was so low, based on the number of questionnaires that were sent out, a survey of the schools that did not appear on the 1962 Office of Education list, and, consequently, were not contacted, is being conducted. We are anxious to see if responses from these schools differ significantly from the responses of those contacted. Three hundred schools, not previously contacted, were randomly selected from state school directories on a percentage basis and were mailed the set of questionnaires.